

Claims

1. A process for controlling a vehicle drive-thru or drive-up facility, the process comprising:

Providing a structural facility adapted to receive, store and deliver commercial and retail classified goods and serviceable items, the structural facility having a centralized order processing portion and a plurality of vehicle drive-thru pick up areas attached to the centralized processing portion adapted to receive a customer's vehicle;

Introducing at least one core computer system communicatively compatible with a customer and with other computers communicating with the core computer system, the core computer system adapted to control, access and deliver the classified goods and serviceable items from within and outside of the facility to a customer's location, adapted to control and access the centralized order processing portion and adapted to control the plurality of drive-thru pick up areas for potential delivery of classified goods and serviceable items to a customer and for potential acceptance of items from a customer, the core computer system further adapted to optimize traffic flow through the drive-thru pick up area.

2. The process according to Claim 1, wherein the vehicle drive-thru pick up area comprises a plurality of staging lanes to accommodate a plurality of customer vehicles, each staging lane being in communication with the core computer system to control traffic.

3. The process according to Claim 2, wherein the vehicle drive-thru pick up area further comprises at least one order placement and delivery station therein, the order placement and delivery station adapted to receive, process and deliver at least one order from a customer.
4. The process according to Claim 3, the order placement and delivery station further adapted to receive service items from a customer.
5. The process according to Claim 3, each order placement and delivery station adapted to receive communications from the customer by at least one electronic means, the electronic means in communication with the core computer system.
6. The process according to Claim 5, the electronic means adapted to communicate with a customer and with other computer systems by voice transmission, by voice synthesizer transmission, by audio transmission, by audio-visual transmission, by radio frequency transmission, by electronic signal transmission, by a touch screen; including by any type of wireless protocol comprising cellular, microwave, 802.11x, Bluetooth, satellite; and including by wirelan protocol comprising a telephone, a handheld devices, an onsite or offsite communication device, a point device, a touch device, a personal computer or any combination thereof.
7. The process according to Claim 6, the electronic means further comprising a pre-ordering communication means, the pre-ordering communication means adapted to facilitate communications between the customer and any tenant, and

between the customer and any computer network in communication with the core computer system, the pre-ordering communication means further adapted to provide pre-sale information to the customer, pricing, including specials, discounts, close-outs and related pre-sales information, corresponding to the classified goods and serviceable items.

8. The process according to Claim 7, the pre-ordering communication means is further adapted to verify customer identification, verify order information and perform payment processing.

9. The process according to Claim 8, the pre-ordering communication means further adapted to facilitate communications between at least one remote electronic device and the core computer system to allow a customer to select the desired classified goods or services, order the selected classified goods or services, and receive confirmation corresponding to the order pick up availability.

10. The process according to Claim 9, the pre-ordering communication means comprising a remotely located computer device adapted to provide communications to a remotely located customer regarding events, promotions, electronic coupons, price changes, specials, new products and other information, the computer device further adapted to store and display the classified goods and service offerings available for customer order.

11. The process according to Claim 9, the pre-ordering communication means comprising a remotely located computer device adapted to provide

communications to a remotely located customer, the computer device adapted to receive and store customer information, customer preferred product information, and past customer order information, and is further adapted to track discarded goods, track inventory for replenishment, generate future order information, and upon command by the customer, replenish goods by communicating at least one order to the core computer system for subsequent delivery to the customer.

12. The process according to Claim 11 wherein the core computer system is adapted to deliver ordered goods or services to a customer's location.

13. The process according to Claim 5 further comprising a verification system in communication with the core computer system, the verification system adapted to authenticate identification of the customer who is purchasing the ordered good or service, verify the customer's ability to purchase the ordered good or service, and if authentication and identification is confirmed, communicate to the core computer system to deliver the ordered good or service to the customer.

14. The process according to Claim 13, the verification system comprising a biometric verification system, the biometric verification system selected from the group of fingerprint verification, eye pattern verification, visual (face) identification verification, license scanning verification, voice verification, vehicle identification verification and, non-invasive cell scan verification.

15. The process according to Claim 3, the core computer system is adapted to communicate with at least one e-commerce network site to receive, send, track,

process and verify orders made by an authenticated customer on the e-commerce network site, and is further adapted to notify the customer of the order availability and to deliver ordered goods to a customer's location.

16. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for receiving customer exchanged goods, receiving damaged goods, receiving mis-processed goods, processing special handle goods and providing refunds if necessary, the pre-defined area being in communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.

17. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for customer service, the pre-defined area being in communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.

18. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for customer assistance, the pre-defined area being in communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.

19. The process according to Claim 3 wherein the faculty further comprises a pre-defined food pick up area within the drive-thru pick up area, the prepared food pick up area adapted to deliver food pre-ordered by a customer.

20. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the facility further comprises at least one pre-defined area for receiving, storing and transporting goods and services which require predefined environmental controls.
21. The process according to Claim 20, wherein environmental controls are selected from the group of humidity controls, product rotation controls, expiration controls, heat controls, refrigeration controls, ambient temperature controls, dry goods handling controls, special handling controls, packaging controls, secure access controls, consolidation and bagging controls and air circulation controls.
22. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the core computer system is adapted to monitor or otherwise sense emissions from a vehicle within or adjacent to the facility, and control one or more exhaust control systems in the facility to vent away the emissions from the facility.
23. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing structure specializing in providing wholesale goods or services.
24. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing strip center.
25. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing box store structure.

26. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing outdoor mall structure.
27. The process according to Claim 3, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing indoor mall structure.
28. The process according to Claim 2, wherein the vehicle drive-thru pick up area further comprises at least one order placement station and at least one delivery station therein, the order placement station and the order delivery station adapted to receive, process and deliver at least one order from a customer.
29. The process according to Claim 28, the order placement and delivery station further adapted to receive service items from a customer.
30. The process according to Claim 28, each order placement and delivery station adapted to receive communications from the customer by at least one electronic means, the electronic means in communication with the core computer system.
31. The process according to Claim 30, the electronic means adapted to communicate with a customer and with other computer systems by voice transmission, by voice synthesizer transmission, by audio transmission, by audio-visual transmission, by radio frequency transmission, by electronic signal transmission, by a touch screen; including by any type of wireless protocol comprising cellular, microwave, 802.11x, Bluetooth, satellite; and including by

wirelan protocol comprising a telephone, a handheld devices, an onsite or offsite communication device, a point device, a touch device, a personal computer or any combination thereof.

32. The process according to Claim 31, the electronic means further comprising a pre-ordering communication means, the pre-ordering communication means adapted to facilitate communications between the customer and any tenant, and between the customer and any computer network in communication with the core computer system, the pre-ordering communication means further adapted to provide pre-sale information to the customer, pricing, including specials, discounts, close-outs and related pre-sales information, corresponding to the classified goods and serviceable items.

33. The process according to Claim 32, the pre-ordering communication means is further adapted to verify customer identification, verify order information and perform payment processing.

34. The process according to Claim 33, the pre-ordering communication means further adapted to facilitate communications between at least one remote electronic device and the core computer system to allow a customer to select the desired classified goods or services, order the selected classified goods or services, and receive confirmation corresponding to the order pick up availability.

35. The process according to Claim 34, the pre-ordering communication means comprising a remotely located computer device adapted to provide

communications to a remotely located customer regarding events, promotions, electronic coupons, price changes, specials, new products and other information, the computer device further adapted to store and display the classified goods and service offerings available for customer order.

36. The process according to Claim 34, the pre-ordering communication means comprising a remotely located computer device adapted to provide communications to a remotely located customer, the computer device adapted to receive and store customer information, customer preferred product information, and past customer order information, and is further adapted to track discarded goods, track inventory for replenishment, generate future order information, and upon command by the customer, replenish goods by communicating at least one order to the core computer system for subsequent delivery to the customer.

37. The process according to Claim 36 wherein the core computer system is adapted to deliver ordered goods or services to a customer's location.

38. The process according to Claim 30 further comprising a verification system in communication with the core computer system, the verification system adapted to authenticate identification of the customer who is purchasing the ordered good or service, verify the customer's ability to purchase the ordered good or service, and if authentication and identification is confirmed, communicate to the core computer system to deliver the ordered good or service to the customer.

39. The process according to Claim 38, the verification system comprising a biometric verification system, the biometric verification system selected from the group of fingerprint verification, eye pattern verification, visual (face) identification verification, license scanning verification, voice verification, vehicle identification verification and, non-invasive cell scan verification.

40. The process according to Claim 28, the core computer system is adapted to communicate with at least one e-commerce network site to receive, send, track, process and verify orders made by an authenticated customer on the e-commerce network site, and is further adapted to notify the customer of the order availability and to deliver ordered goods to a customer's location.

41. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for receiving customer exchanged goods, receiving damaged goods, receiving mis-processed goods, processing special handle goods and providing refunds if necessary, the pre-defined area being in communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.

42. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for customer service, the pre-defined area being in communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.

43. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for customer assistance, the pre-defined area being in

communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.

44. The process according to Claim 28 wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined food pick up area within the drive-thru pick up area, the prepared food pick up area adapted to deliver food pre-ordered by a customer.

45. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the facility further comprises at least one pre-defined area for receiving, storing and transporting goods and services which require predefined environmental controls.

46. The process according to Claim 45, wherein environmental controls are selected from the group of humidity controls, product rotation controls, expiration controls, heat controls, refrigeration controls, ambient temperature controls, dry goods handling controls, special handling controls, packaging controls, secure access controls, consolidation and bagging controls and air circulation controls.

47. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the core computer system is adapted to monitor or otherwise sense emissions from a vehicle within or adjacent to the facility, and control one or more exhaust control systems in the facility to vent away the emissions from the facility.

48. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing structure specializing in providing wholesale goods or services.

49. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing strip center.

50. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing box store structure.

51. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing outdoor mall structure.

52. The process according to Claim 28, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing indoor mall structure.

53. The process according to Claim 1, wherein the step of introducing a core computer system further comprises the steps of allowing the core computer system to:

direct a customer to an ordering placement station;

receive communications from, and transmit communications to, the customer through an electronic means corresponding to an ordered classified good or serviceable item, the electronic means being in communication with the core computer system;

obtain remuneration from the customer;

control and operate a materials handling system to obtain the ordered good or serviceable item from within a pre-defined portion of the facility, and transport the ordered good or serviceable item to an order assembly and

consolidation area within the facility;

direct the customer to an order delivery station;

if a customer is not waiting for delivery, transport the ordered goods or serviceable item to a staging area for later delivery; and

if a customer is waiting for delivery, transport the ordered goods or serviceable item to the customer to a pre-selected delivery station.

54. The process according to Claim 53, the electronic means adapted to communicate with a customer voice transmission, by voice synthesizer transmission, by audio transmission, by audio-visual transmission, by radio frequency transmission, by electronic signal transmission, by a touch screen; including by any type of wireless protocol comprising cellular, microwave, 802.11x, Bluetooth, satellite; and including by wirelan protocol comprising a telephone, a handheld devices, an onsite or offsite communication device, a point device, a touch device, a personal computer or any combination thereof.

55. The process according to Claim 54 further comprising the steps of allowing the core computer system to:

verify that the ordered good or serviceable item is available; and

transmit order information to at least one tenant within the facility.

56. A method for managing a facility offering classified goods and serviceable items by at least one core computer system, the facility containing a plurality of vehicle drive-thru areas, the steps comprising the core computer:

directing a customer vehicle to an order station through a traffic

control system in communication with the core computer;

receiving the customer's order information through an electronic means;

communicating the customer's historical order data through the electronic means;

receiving payment from the customer corresponding to the order;

verifying and processing the order; and

directing the customer to a delivery station for order delivery.

57. The method of Claim 56 wherein the step of processing the order further comprises the steps of:

Notifying the customer of the inventory status;

Controlling a materials handling system to obtain the ordered good or serviceable item from within a pre-defined portion of the facility, and transport the ordered good or serviceable item to an order assembly and consolidation area within the facility;

Communicating any order information to a corresponding tenant's computer processing system;

Transmitting corresponding financial information to the corresponding tenant's computer processing system;

confirming that the order corresponds to the customer who placed the order;

if a customer is not waiting for delivery, controlling the materials handling system transport the ordered goods or serviceable item to a staging area for later delivery to the customer to a pre-selected delivery station; and

if a customer is waiting for delivery, controlling the materials handling system to transport the ordered goods or serviceable item to the customer to a pre-selected delivery station.

58. The method of Claim 56 wherein the electronic means communicates with the customer by voice transmission, by voice synthesizer transmission, by audio transmission, by audio-visual transmission, by radio frequency transmission, by electronic signal transmission, by a touch screen; including by any type of wireless protocol comprising cellular, microwave, 802.11x, Bluetooth, satellite; and including by wirelan protocol comprising a telephone, a handheld devices, an onsite or offsite communication device, a point device, a touch device, or a computer;

59. The method of Claim 57 wherein the pre-defined portion of the facility comprises at least an area storing high customer demand classified goods or serviceable items, an area storing frequently purchased classified goods or serviceable items and an area storing remaining classified goods or serviceable items, these areas in communication with the core computer system through the materials handling system.

60. The process according to Claim 56, the electronic means further comprising a pre-ordering communication means, the pre-ordering communication means adapted to facilitate communications between the customer and any tenant, and between the customer and any computer network in communication with the core computer system, the pre-ordering communication means further adapted to provide pre-sale information to the customer, pricing, including specials, discounts,

close-outs and related pre-sales information, corresponding to the classified goods and serviceable items.

61. The process according to Claim 60, the pre-ordering communication means is further adapted to verify customer identification, verify order information and perform payment processing.

62. The process according to Claim 60, the pre-ordering communication means further adapted to facilitate communications between at least one remote electronic device and the core computer system to allow a customer to select the desired classified goods or services, order the selected classified goods or services, and receive confirmation corresponding to the order pick up availability.

63. The process according to Claim 60, the pre-ordering communication means comprising a remotely located computer device adapted to provide communications to a remotely located customer regarding events, promotions, electronic coupons, price changes, specials, new products and other information, the computer device further adapted to store and display the classified goods and service offerings available for customer order.

64. The process according to Claim 60, the pre-ordering communication means comprising a remotely located computer device adapted to provide communications to a remotely located customer, the computer device adapted to receive and store customer information, customer preferred product information, and past customer order information, and is further adapted to track discarded

goods, track inventory for replenishment, generate future order information, and upon command by the customer, replenish goods by communicating at least one order to the core computer system for subsequent delivery to the customer.

65. The process according to Claim 62 wherein the core computer system is adapted to deliver ordered goods or services to a customer's location.

66. The process according to Claim 57 further comprising a verification system in communication with the core computer system, the verification system adapted to authenticate identification of the customer who is purchasing the ordered good or service, verify the customer's ability to purchase the ordered good or service, and if authentication and identification is confirmed, communicate to the core computer system to deliver the ordered good or service to the customer.

67. The process according to Claim 66, the verification system comprising a biometric verification system, the biometric verification system selected from the group of fingerprint verification, eye pattern verification, visual (face) identification verification, license scanning verification, voice verification, vehicle identification verification and, non-invasive cell scan verification.

68. The process according to Claim 57, the core computer system is adapted to communicate with at least one e-commerce network site to receive, send, track, process and verify orders made by an authenticated customer on the e-commerce network site, and is further adapted to notify the customer of the order availability and to deliver ordered goods to a customer's location.

69. The process according to Claim 57, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for receiving customer exchanged goods, receiving damaged goods, receiving mis-processed goods, processing special handle goods and providing refunds if necessary, the pre-defined area being in communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.
70. The process according to Claim 57, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for customer service, the pre-defined area being in communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.
71. The process according to Claim 57, wherein the facility further comprises a pre-defined area for customer assistance, the pre-defined area being in communication with the core computer system through a materials handling system.
72. The process according to Claim 57 wherein the faculty further comprises a pre-defined food pick up area within the drive-thru pick up area, the prepared food pick up area adapted to deliver food pre-ordered by a customer.
73. The process according to Claim 57, wherein the facility further comprises at least one pre-defined area for receiving, storing and transporting goods and services which require predefined environmental controls.

74. The process according to Claim 73, wherein environmental controls are selected from the group of humidity controls, product rotation controls, expiration controls, heat controls, refrigeration controls, ambient temperature controls, dry goods handling controls, special handling controls, packaging controls, secure access controls, consolidation and bagging controls and air circulation controls.
75. The process according to Claim 56, wherein the core computer system is adapted to monitor or otherwise sense emissions from a vehicle within or adjacent to the facility, and control one or more exhaust control systems in the facility to vent away the emissions from the facility.
76. The process according to Claim 56, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing structure specializing in providing wholesale goods or services.
77. The process according to Claim 56, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing strip center.
78. The process according to Claim 56, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing box store structure.
79. The process according to Claim 56, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing outdoor mall structure.

80. The process according to Claim 56, wherein the structural facility is adapted to annex to, or otherwise structurally couple to, an existing indoor mall structure.